

APPROVED
MINUTES
NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS
REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
JULY 22, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.

Cumulative Attendance
May 2015 - April 2016

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Steve Lucas, Chair	P	3	0
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair (dep. 5:23)	P	3	0
Jessie Adderley	P	2	1
Leann Barber	P	2	0
Sonya Burrows	P	3	0
Ron Centamore	P	2	1
Alan Gabriel	A	2	1
Camille Hansen	P	2	1
Mickey Hinton	P	1	2
John Hooper	A	2	1
Dylan Lagi	P	3	0
Scott Strawbridge	P	3	0
John Wilkes (arr. 3:56)	P	3	0

Currently there are 13 appointed members to the Board, which means 7 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

Staff

Bob Wojcik, Planner III
Fort Lauderdale City Commissioner Dean Trantalis
Jenni Morejon, Director, Department of Sustainable Development
Al Battle, Deputy Director, Department of Sustainable Development
Thomasina Turner-Diggs, CRA Project Coordinator
Lutecia Florencia, Clerk
Debbie Griner, Transportation Manager
Karen Mendrala, Livability Planner
Antoinette Butler, Public Works/Engineering Department
Jamie Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes from June 24, 2015 Meeting

III. Redevelopment Plan – Modifications Update

Ms. Hansen noted a correction to her attendance record.

Motion made by Ms. Hansen, seconded by Mr. Strawbridge, to approve the minutes [as amended].

Chair Lucas referred to p.3, paragraph 4 of the June 24 minutes, requesting clarification of the need for all funding requests to fit within the CRA Plan. Mr. Wojcik explained that the intent is for the Board to modify the CRA Plan to incorporate existing programs and projects that may not be clearly included in the current Plan as well as those programs and projects planned for fiscal year (FY) 2016. All items must be consistent with the CRA Plan's objectives to remove blight and assist in the redevelopment of the area.

Chair Lucas clarified that he wished to know if items that will come before the Board both today and at future meetings would be assumed to be included within the Plan. Mr. Battle stated that there were no items on today's Agenda that are not consistent with the existing CRA Plan: for example, although the Plan does not specifically address the Sun Trolley, it does support mass transit.

Mr. Battle continued that capital projects, such as neighborhood improvements, have also been found to be consistent with the CRA Plan in the past. He confirmed, however, that because the current CRA Plan has been in effect for several years, it will require modifications to make it more consistent with the types of projects the Board wishes to accomplish. He concluded that while Staff does not feel any projects brought before the Board either in the past or at today's meeting are inconsistent with the Plan, modifications to the Plan will be more specific with respect to these projects and programs, as well as others to be considered in the future.

Mr. Battle advised that Plan modifications typically take months to achieve; Staff's goal is to discuss the issue of modifications before the City Commission at the first available meeting and develop a schedule for implementation. He recalled that the most recent Plan amendment added community policing and wifi services, and took approximately three to four months to complete.

Jenni Morejon, Director of the Department of Sustainable Development, advised that modification of the CRA Plan is a two-tiered process: the first phase of planned

amendments will ensure that all projects that have been funded, completed, or are currently in a planning phase are included in the Plan. The second phase will take place in 2016, and will more fully amend and update the CRA Plan to consider the full life of the CRA over the next ten years. The length of the process is due in part to the requirements for public outreach and financial analysis, which must accompany any amendment to the Plan. She emphasized that the intent of the Plan is the elimination of slum and blight, to which all programmatic aspects of the Plan must be tied.

Mr. Strawbridge stated that he has reviewed the CRA Plans of other cities, which he felt provide much greater detail and focus in terms of their programs. He pointed out that while Staff may feel it is appropriate to provide funds to the Sun Trolley, another reading of the Plan points out that the CRA is not intended to support an ongoing government service, such as public transportation. He also referred to a specific legal opinion from Florida's Attorney General, which asserts that a CRA may not use funds to pay entities promoting tourism or providing socially beneficial programs.

Mr. Strawbridge concluded that this opinion raised concerns related to the Board's funding of the two requests on today's Agenda, and does not appear to be consistent with Staff's analysis that past projects and programs funded by the Board fit into the CRA Plan. He requested that Staff provide an opinion reflecting that these items are included in the Plan and why, and that they are also addressed by the Attorney General's opinion as referenced above. He did not feel comfortable supporting any items that were not accompanied by an affirmative opinion from Staff showing that they meet both the intent of the CRA Plan and State law.

Mr. Wojcik advised that there are three prohibitions affecting the use of CRA funds:

- Construction of administrative buildings;
- Public improvements scheduled pursuant to a previously approved project unless that project has been removed from the capital improvement program for three years;
- General government operating expenditures unrelated to the CRA Plan.

He added that the Attorney General's opinion is not part of the legislation governing CRAs. Unless prohibited by law, the Board must still act within its authority to carry out the CRA Plan. He concluded that he felt the Board was acting within its powers with regard to funding the items that are brought before it.

Mr. Strawbridge expressed concern that the Board has been advised by Staff that they may not take action on items not included in the Plan, and they are now being informed that they may act unless the action is specifically prohibited. Mr. Wojcik confirmed that while the Board should not take any action not included in the Plan, Staff is working to make any necessary amendments or corrections as soon as possible.

Jim Ellis, President of the Flagler Village Improvement Association, recalled that both the Board and the City Commission have approved funding for an ambassador program, which is now affected by the confusion about what is allowed under the CRA Plan. Mr. Battle explained that because this program is not specifically identified in the Plan, the Board may not provide this funding until the Plan has been modified accordingly. The previous Plan amendment addressing community policing was determined to need stronger language before it can cover the ambassador program. In addition, previous Board discussion of the ambassador program has led to the conclusion that the program should be implemented throughout the entire CRA rather than in one area. He concluded that the program may not be funded at this time.

In a voice vote, the **motion** to approve the June 24, 2015 minutes as amended passed unanimously.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

VI. Flagler Village Civic Association – 2015/16 Funding Request

Chris Guidry, representing Atlantic Studios, explained that this entity is the operator of most events within Flagler Village, including Food in Motion and the Night Owl Market, within the past eight months. He estimated that a typical Food in Motion event draws 3000 to 4000 attendees for an evening, while the Night Owl Market attracts more than 10,000. He showed a PowerPoint presentation revisiting recent events and successes throughout the neighborhood, including the role played by these events in attracting visitors and new businesses, contributing to a safer environment, and creating a stronger sense of community.

Ms. Hansen explained that the funding request is for \$142,500 for 26 events. Over the past six months, there has been a significant increase in visitors to the community, as well as a decrease in criminal activity. She emphasized the importance of these events to the Flagler Village community.

Chair Lucas noted that \$40,000 has already been earmarked for the Association in the current budget; the request before the Board is for an additional \$102,500, which was moved from the capital budget to the operating budget by a previous budget amendment.

Mr. Battle recommended that Ms. Hansen recuse herself from moving or voting upon this Item, but confirmed that she may participate in discussion of it.

No motion was made regarding the Item.

Fort Lauderdale City Commissioner Dean Trantalis requested clarification that the Item before the Board was not in violation of the CRA Plan, but was not recommended by the

Board. Chair Lucas explained that although the Board declined to recommend this funding request, the original \$40,000 earmarked to the Flagler Village Civic Association would remain in the budget.

Mr. Strawbridge pointed out that there are no references to events or specific forms of transit in this Plan, and referred to the Attorney General's opinion mentioned earlier, which states that the CRA should not provide funds to nonprofit entities for event programming. He expressed concern that the CRA may not be operating as it was originally intended.

Mr. Battle explained to Commissioner Trantalis that many of the Board members share the opinion that because funding events is not specifically identified in the CRA Plan, it may constitute a problem until it is addressed through an amendment; he also recalled that during the Board's 2014 budget discussion, concerns were raised regarding the funding of events. He characterized this as a philosophical as well as a legal issue, as the CRA may be spending its dollars in a manner inconsistent with the CRA Plan. He reiterated that the Plan requires amendment in order to make some expenditures, including established events such as Light Up Sistrunk, more valid.

Vice Chair Phillips emphasized the need for Staff to take time to determine what amendments must legally be made before some Items may be approved. Mr. Wilkes reiterated that the Board was recently informed that they may not have been in compliance when funding various items in recent years, which led them to inform the City Commission that the CRA Plan should be amended as soon as possible. Chair Lucas clarified that the issue regarding Item VI was not whether or not events may be funded, but that the Board did not wish to recommend providing an additional \$102,500 in funding.

IV. TMA Sun Trolley NW Community / Neighborhood Link Funding Request

Tara Crawford, Interim Director of the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Transportation Management Association (TMA), showed a PowerPoint presentation to the Board. The Sun Trolley operates three routes within the CRA district: the Northwest Community Link, the Neighborhood Link, and the Downtown Link. Of the Sun Trolley's total 2014 ridership of over 500,000 passengers, these three routes account for 230,000. The Sun Trolley also provides special event service within the Northwest CRA, providing transportation to the Art Walk, Food in Motion, and Night Owl Market events in Flagler Village.

Karen Mendrala, Livability Planner with the Department of Transportation and Mobility, advised that the TMA's request is for \$261,612. This is an increase over the previous year in order to include the Downtown Link, which was not included in the 2014 request. The request is based on the percentage of the three routes operating within the CRA.

Mr. Wilkes asked to know the effect the extension of the Wave Modern Streetcar route would have on TMA services. Ms. Mendrala explained that expansion of the Wave would not have an effect on the overall Sun Trolley service, but would free up the trolleys in this area to be redeployed elsewhere. Chair Lucas characterized the Sun Trolley's routes as feeder routes for the Wave.

It was noted that as part of Fort Lauderdale's community bus system, the Sun Trolley is not allowed to duplicate any routes served by Broward County Transit (BCT), such as service to the Sistrunk Business District, although it does briefly travel some blocks of Sistrunk Boulevard. Ms. Burrows asserted that she did not feel services would be duplicated unless BCT also provided free service in this area. Mr. Wilkes advocated consideration of the TMA request as an alternative to expansion of the Wave streetcar.

No motion was made to fund the TMA request at this time.

V. Follow-Up Joint Workshop

a) Update on Progresso Village Streetscape

Mr. Wojcik noted that this project received \$50,000 in funding from the CRA, \$300,000 in additional funding from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and \$570,000 in City matching funds. Antoinette Butler, project manager, distributed a handout on this project, which extends from Sunrise Boulevard to Sistrunk Boulevard and 5th Avenue to Andrews Avenue. She noted that the project's budget was recently re-estimated at \$2.7 million. The project is still seeking \$1.8 million in funds for the balance of the project. The project team is considering different pricing alternatives and phasing of the work in order to complete the project before the grant expires on March 31, 2016.

Mr. Strawbridge asserted that this project fits within the CRA Plan, as it will make public infrastructure improvements. Mr. Battle reiterated that the project should begin an accelerated construction process in order to be completed before the expiration of the \$300,000 grant. He concluded that the Board will hear a request at a subsequent meeting to increase the project's funding once the costs have been determined.

Motion made by Mr. Strawbridge, seconded by Ms. Burrows, supporting [Staff] coming back and making a request. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

b) Update on Flagler Village Lighting

Mr. Wojcik recalled that a study of existing lighting levels, the costs of lamps, and installation and maintenance costs was done in 2014. He noted that some lights in the subject area are owned by the City, some by the County, and some by Florida Power & Light (FPL), which may present a coordination issue. Debbie Griner, Transportation

Manager with the Department of Transportation and Mobility, advised that a meeting is scheduled between the Public Works Department, the Department of Transportation and Mobility, and FPL. Both the Northwest and Beach CRAs have been identified as top priorities for the City, which means the City Commission will direct Staff to focus on certain projects within these areas.

Mr. Battle noted that the initial evaluation of the area was intended to identify whether lighting standards were considered to be low or high, or where additional lighting issues needed to be addressed; the next phase of the study determines which engineering concepts the Board wished to begin as capital projects. Some areas identified as being in need of upgrades are already underway, and the CRA is assisting some of these improvements through redevelopment funds. This means the footprint of where lighting infrastructure will be built is constantly shifting as more projects are begun. He advised that next steps will identify where lighting gaps exist.

Mr. Strawbridge pointed out that the CRA Plan does not address the need for lighting, and the Plan will need to be amended in order to continue this project. Mr. Wojcik reviewed the process for amending the CRA Plan, noting that a major update was implemented in 2001, followed by another amendment related to the annexation of Riverbend Corporate Park by the City and its inclusion in the Plan. A recent Plan amendment occurred in 2013 to add activities associated with community policing, wireless cameras, and public wifi.

Mr. Wojcik continued that once the Board recommends a Plan amendment to the CRA Board, a public hearing must be held, followed by approval of a resolution. Taxable entities are informed of this public process. The Plan is then presented to the County for review. He noted that County approval is required for any substantive changes to the CRA Plan, although "substantive" is not clearly defined. He concluded that the amendment process to incorporate previously approved projects may not be as lengthy as expected.

Vice Chair Phillips left the meeting at 5:23 p.m.

Ms. Griner advised that a natural starting place for the lighting project will be to revisit the recommendations made by the lighting study, determine where gaps and opportunities exist, and find out which improvements are within FPL's capacity to complete.

c) CRA Incentive Programs Discussion

Chair Lucas recalled that one issue discussed at the recent joint workshop with the CRA Board was how CRA dollars might be used more aggressively to incentivize greater density and residential housing in support of commercial development. Mr. Wojcik provided a list of the CRA's incentive programs so the members could review what has

or has not been successful, and determine possible new incentives. Mr. Battle recalled that there had been discussion of existing build-out incentive programs and how they could be amended or enhanced to make them more attractive.

It was suggested that the members review their information packets for further discussion at a subsequent meeting.

VII. Communication to CRA Board

None.

Ms. Hansen pointed out that with regard to her making a motion for Item VI, another Board member had been allowed to make a motion on a similar item at a previous meeting. Mr. Battle stated that he had recommended against her making this motion as she had participated in the presentation of the Item.

Ms. Hansen also requested clarification of whether the Board had felt it could not move to approve Item VI due to the need for CRA Plan amendment(s). Ms. Adderley responded that at a previous meeting, the Board was cautioned to reconsider granting CRA funds for special events, as this is not currently allowed by the Plan.

Ms. Hansen also requested confirmation of what the Mosaic Group hopes to achieve for the CRA, and whether their contract will be up for annual renewal. Mr. Battle advised that the Mosaic Group's contract is not tied to the fiscal year; they have been paid just over \$41,000 and their one-year contract provides renewal options. Ms. Morejon stated that after outreach to community stakeholders in neighborhoods along Sistrunk Boulevard, Progresso Village, and Flagler Village, it was determined that these neighborhoods are in need of branding. Work toward branding and imagery for these areas are currently underway.

Ms. Morejon continued that another area of focus is the re-branding or renaming of the entire CRA district in order to create a stronger brand destination and sense of place. A series of focus group meetings were proposed to have community representatives consider different ideas for rebranding.

The members reviewed some of the themes and logos presented at a recent focus group meeting, noting that none have been finalized thus far. Ms. Morejon noted that is difficult to develop a tag line or catchphrase that can encompass a large district such as the Northwest CRA. Mr. Lagi recommended that members of business associations in the area should be invited to participate in the focus groups, along with members of civic associations and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce.

VIII. Old / New Business (Retail Lease Track)

Mr. Strawbridge commented that the fight against slum and blight in Flagler Village appears to be succeeding, noting the recent development of studio apartments.

Mr. Centamore suggested that because increased property values could result in a tax windfall for the City, CRA funds could be provided to the Parks and Recreation Department to schedule and oversee special events.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]